

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 297 (Senator Miller)
Economic and Environmental Affairs

Election Laws - Voting Systems

This bill prohibits the State Board of Elections from certifying a voting system that uses mechanical lever machines after January 1, 2002.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The State Board of Elections could certify voting systems with existing resources.

Local Effect: Allegany, Dorchester, and Prince George's Counties' expenditures would increase significantly. No effect on revenues. **This bill imposes a mandate on local governments.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

Local Effect: Three counties currently use mechanical lever voting machines: Allegany, Dorchester, and Prince George's. Under the bill, these counties would have to purchase new voting systems by January 1, 2002. The three counties are currently considering replacement of their voting systems.

Prince George's County advises that the actual cost of replacing its voting system depends on the type of replacement system and whether it is purchased outright or leased. The potential magnitude in costs for Prince George's County would be similar to those incurred by Baltimore City or Baltimore County in replacing their voting systems. Baltimore City recently purchased a new voting system at a cost of \$6.5 million while Baltimore County

leases their voting system at a cost of \$3.7 million over seven years.

Dorchester County advises that it would cost approximately \$350,000 to replace its voting system. Allegany County advises that the cost of replacing its voting system would be approximately \$600,000. Both counties advise that new machines would be purchased outright.

Information Source(s): Allegany County, Dorchester County, Prince George's County, State Administrative Board of Election Laws, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 22, 1999

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